LET'S TAKE A SECOND LOOK

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Old habits, they say, die hard. Unlike old soldiers, they do not easily fade away. This is the reason perhaps why I still continue to indulge in the old habit of closely following the conduct of our foreign relations and developments in the international scene at large long after I had ceased to have any participation in this vital government function. It has been more than three years since I left the diplomatic services but I have found it difficult to get rid of my abiding interest in this all-engrossing field.

My present detachment from the making and execution of our foreign policy has its advantages. It has enabled me to view the thinking behind some of its basic premises in sharper focus and wider perspective. And they have given rise in my mind to certain doubts concerning their continued validity.

Our So-Called Asian Policy

Let us start with what may be conveniently called our Asian policy. It had its beginning at a time when the countries around us, countries which we are bound by geographic, ethnic and cultural ties as well as common colonial experience, were engaged in throwing off the shackles of foreign rule. It was therefore logical that we, who had just then reacquired our sovereignty should express that policy by pledging our support for the aspirations of subject peoples for self-government and independence. After they, too, and others farther away from our common area, became sovereign and independent, after sensing that despite our professions of sympathy and protestations of identity with these nations we were somehow not counted as one of them, we gave voice to a desire to re-

establish that identity, to restore our Asian moorings, so to speak. We went about this task by such traditionally accepted methods as extendng diplomatic recognition to these countries in their new status, exchanging diplomatic representatives, concluding amity and cultural treaties, sending goodwill missions and occasionally voting with their delegates in the councils of the United Nations and other international organizations and gatherings. in keeping with our own interests.

But all these have apparently not been enough to bring about acceptance of the Philippines as part of the group and of the fact that we Filipinos share the same Asian roots. We still do not belong. Let us accept the fact that we continue to be suspect in most Asian eyes. Our long Western association, the influence of this association on our thinking, outlook, ways, likes and dislikes, our alignment with the West in the current struggle for world power have kept us apart.

I believe the time has come for us to stop deluding ourselves in this respect and to adopt another approach. Let us stop begging for acceptance at our neighbors' doors and outgrow the attitude of self-deprecation in pleading for admission to the "Asian club." Instead, let us first prove to them that we are worth accepting. We can only do otherwise at the expense of our dignity and self-respect. We believe in regional exchange and cooperation but not in paying for them at so high a price.

It cannot be denied that compared with most of the newly-independent countries in Asia, we were better prepared to take on the responsibilities of independent nationhood and have since made appreciable material progress. We are ahead of some of them in political and even economic development although we could have gone farther with more efficient management without official corruption and given a dedicated, strong and responsive leadership. We are learning how to develop our natural wealth and how to use that wealth in improving the lot of our people. We have been able to forge ahead partly with the help of other friendly countries, particularly the United States. Let us take, to cite a few examples, the strides we have made in modern farming methods, cooperatives, community development, distribution and

marketing, soil conservation and irrigation, health and sanitation, anti-Communist subversion, hydroelectric power development, light industries, education and other fields. We have taken these gains for granted and have even spoken depreciatingly of them at times in the heat of partisan political strife. But measured in terms of what some of our neighbors in Asia have achieved, we have, I believe, accomplished more.

Our job is to turn their eyes to these accomplishments, modest as they are. These are the commodities we should also export. They are the arguments that should "sell" us to our Asian neighbors. Several of these countries have begun to take notice. Sometime ago, an Indian delegation made it a point to pass through Manila to learn more about community development before proceeding to Geneva to attend a world conference on the subject. Malayans have come to find out the reasons for our success in defeating the Huk movement.

Once we have shown that we have employed the Western ingredients of our national upbringing for our own benefit without giving up what is ours, once we have something useful for other Asian countries to emulate or adopt, acceptance may not be difficult. Japan is a case in point. It has never been anything to other Asian countries but Asian and of Asia regardless of how much the Japanese have learned from and imbibed of the West.

Nationalism of Rising Peoples

With us Filipinos, the spirit of nationalism rose to its zenith at the time of our libertarian fight against Spanish rule. It continued up to the American regime and spurred us in our subsequent struggle for independence. During all this time, most of our fellow Asian countries were still parts of colonial empires although they already felt the same stirrings of freedom and made repeated attempts at achieving self-emancipation. To us and to them, in that difficult but glorious period, nationalism and patriotism carried the same meaning.

This is not meant to imply that these virtues die after the aims which they have inspired have been achieved. But it is a fact that nationalism subsequently acquires some degrees of tempering, breadth and maturity, a kind of seasoning that goes with the sober realization of the

magnitude and complexity of the challenge of nation-building.

Every young nation goes through this process sooner or later. The Philippines passed through such a transition ahead of most of her Asian neighbors. We were already hard at work in making our country stand on its feet and our young democracy succeed while some countries around us were still trying to free themselves from their bondage as subject peoples. We have reached a point of maturity well beyond their reaction to this change which in most cases took on xenophobic undertones.

But caught in the tide of nationalistic fever that consumed these countries, conscious of our isolation from them as a result of our Western associations, we lately began tracing a course for our foreign policy based on the nationalism that we knew and practiced during the revolutionary stage of our history. Thus, our abortive attempt to put a label to this trend by borrowing Japan's wartime expansionist slogan of "Asia for the Asians" and the advent of what our present policymakers refer to as "respectable independence" and the "Filipino First" policy.

Albert Camus, that great and late-lamented French philosopher and resistance leader, once said that he "loved his country too much to be a nationalist." What he meant perhaps was that there is a kind of nationalism which is not synonymous with patriotism because it is harmful to a country's interest. If Manuel Luis Quezon were alive today, he would have expressed this thought by saying that his nationalism ends where the good of his country begins.

The Philippines has been a free and sovereign nations member of the community of these last fifteen years. In her present status she has acquired responsibilities and obligations that have made it impossible for her to live in a world by and unto herself.. From considerations of national security and economic advancement alone, she must accept the concept of a world, one and interdependent, as well as its practical realities. There no longer are such things as complete and absolute independence, political or economic. Other Asian countries have since graduated from this attitude. Hence we find the policies of

India, Burma and Pakistan on foreign investments, for example, more attuned to these realities.

We in the Philippines, on the other hand, have failed to adjust ourselves to these facts. On the matter of the participation of foreign capital in our economic development, we have only sown confusion among our own people and the outside world by our inconsistencies and contradictions. While we extend a welcoming hand to foreign investors and solemnly assure them of our need for their assistance to enable us to make full use of our natural resources and advance the pace of our economic growth, we blithely adopt policies that are antagonistic if not outright hostile. During all this time we have also shown a naive and complacent attitude on the use which international Communism, through its homegrown adherents and hirelings, have made of nationalism to serve its destructive ends.

In asserting our nationalism, we must guard against confusing substance with form, the important with the inconsequential. We have been wont to strike nationalistic poses, for example, on such graver issues as our national defense, overlooking their far-reaching and vital implications. We forget that, as in the case of foreign military bases in our country, for instance, we had temporarily waived the full exercise of our sovereignty over these areas in order to more effectively insure our security and that this act of voluntary and temporary relinquishment in the interest of a larger common good is of itself an expression of sovereign prerogative.

A people devoid of nationalistic spirit is dead. But there is great cause of fear for a nation heading towards nationalism in its narrow and myopic form, especially a nationalism that consents to exploitation and prostitution by the ruling powers for their own selfish ends. This may be the moment, therefore, to restore order and impart coherence to our understanding and practice of nationalism and extend our thinking beyond its present parochial bounds.

The Case Against The United Nations

We have declared, as one of the basic tenets of our foreign policy, adherence to and support for the aims and principles enunciated in

the Charter of the United Nations. This declaration is an expression of faith in the effectiveness of that world organization in keeping world peace. In practical terms it means that as part of that body we look up to it to further safeguard our national security. Through our membership, it is true, we have taken our rightful place among other sovereign states and have benefitted from its assistance in the economic, social and cultural fields. But the principal considerations behind our participation in the UN is related to the problem of our security.

The weight of the moral force that the UN is supposed to exert against aggression and other breaches of world peace, the promise of collective assistance from fellow members in the regional security alliance which we have joined and the more categorical pledge of similar help under our mutual defense pact with the United States, are the three legs on which the structure of our national security rests. But events have tended to demonstrate how weak the first two supports of this structure are. One has only to recall, with unhappy memories, the futility that were Korea, Vietnam, Hungary, Suez, Tibet, the Congo, Angola and now Laos, Cuba, Biserte and Berlin. Laos is said to have brought about the recently-formed Association of Southeast Asian States (ASAS) because of the failure of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) which came in the wake of the disaster of Dien Bien Phu, to live up to our expectations. The organizational structure of the UN itself is under Communist siege with the Soviet demand for a drastic and far-reaching change in the office of the Secretary-General.

The record of that world body, in other words, has not served to strengthen our faith in it. That record has given us reason to think twice about the assumptions we have earlier and more hopefully held. That faith has been shaken instead. The late John Foster Dulles, one of the principal architects of the Charter, voiced this hope once by saying that much can be done *under* the UN that cannot be done *by* it." By this he must have anticipated the difficulties which now beset that organization. Time has since proved him right in the second part of this statement. There is not much to show,

however, that he was also right in the first.

Writing in the July issue of Fortune magazine, Max Ways advanced the thesis that our hopes and expectations "would be valid only if the UN were capable of recognizing, promulgating and enforcing rules of international order." "Some Americans," he added, "speak of the United Nations as "above' the nations. This is true only in the sense that an attic is at the top of a house; it is where the nations put their international problems. The UN debates. The UN sometimes decides, as when it instructs its Secretary-General to isolate the Congo from big-power politics. But the UN never seriously attempts to establish the rules that would limit its member governments."

Mr. Ways further advanced the opinion that "no rewording of the Charter is going to work unless it clearly recognizes an objective source of international law outside the nations themselves." Quoting the same author still further, "more and more, the Communists show they they recognize the UN as a magnificent arena for propaganda."

Harry A. Kissinger concisely described the way in which the new nations use the UN in the following language:

"Many of the leaders of the new states want the best of two worlds: of neutrality and of judging all disputes... Playing a role on the international scene seems more dramatic and simpler than the complex job of domestic construction... Domestically, each action has a price. But on the international scene, it is possible to be the center of attention simply by striking a pose. Here ambitious men can play the dramatic role so often denied to them at home and so consistent with their image of the role of a national leader."

It has been said that "a workable foreign policy can never be static. To build a policy on a *status quo* is an illusion that can lead only to disappointment. For nations, like human beings are, born, live through a period of adolescence, become mature, and die. Stand-still acts as a cancerous disease on a nation's body." Let us take heed that the march of world events does not leave us with

NEW DRUG APPEARS EFFECTIVE AGAINST HAY EVER

A new drug that has given good results to some 500 patients in combating hay fever created considerable interest among doctors who attended a recent meeting of the American Academy of Allergy. The drug is called allpyral, a short term for "alum precipitated pyridine-ragweed complex."

In practice, allpyral is used to desensitize patients who get hay fever from ragweed pollen before the hay fever season arrives. It differs from standard aqueous pollen extracts in that it contains the pollen oils as well as the proteins.

Allpyral is absorbed slowly by the body, and physicians can therefore give much larger doses of it at one time. This means that the number of injections can be reduced. From present indications it appears that one injection of allpyral every four to six weeks is sufficient. With the aqueous solutions, one injection a week is usually needed.

In the 500 or more patients already studied in the United States, 89 to 93 per cent have shown improvement. With standard aqueous solutions, about 80 to 85 per cent improve.

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a foreign policy that is outdated and no longer workable.

These then are some of the thoughts that a former diplomat, turned businessman and armchair diplomatic analyst, offers to those who are presently in charge of charting and steering our country's course in the turbulent sea of world affairs. These views may not find ready concurrence, especially among the uninitiated and uninformed. But in the difficult business of providing one's country with the best possible of such courses and of trying to keep to it, we can only ignore these realities at great risk.